sought, particularly in areas of infrastructure, high technology and exports. Telecommunications sector meets this description and accordingly a decision has been taken in this regard.

(c) No fresh proposal has been received after the announcement of the decision to enhance FDI limits in telecom sector from 49% to 74%. Till December 2004, total FDI inflow in telecom sector stood at Rs. 10,318.3 crore.

Improvement of Telecom Services

329. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that even today BSNL is unable to reduce the waitlist for phones in rural areas of the country;

(b) if so, the present waiting list for phones in the country;

(c) the reasons for the slow reduction of this waiting list;

(d) whether the slow work of BSNL is chasing away customers to other telecom service providers; and

(e) the steps Government propose to improve the BSNL's record in improving telecom services?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) The rural Waiting List of BSNL is 13,48,624 as on 31.12.2004. This waiting list is in remote and far flung rural areas of the country which are non feasible from its present network.

(c) The reasons for slow reduction in waiting list are as follows:

(i) The waiting list is mostly in remote and far flung rural areas and it requires deployment of huge network for covering very small scattered demands;

(ii) The rural areas have no stable electrical power supply without which Exchanges cannot function reliably.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Government has set up USO Fund for providing support in the unremunerative rural, remote/inaccessible areas. Government has in addition provided reimbursement of Licence Fee and Spectrum Charges to BSNL from 2000-01 which will continue till 2005-06 for undertaking telephony in unremunerative areas.

BSNL is also undertaking following measures to clear the waitlist:

(i) Large scale deployment of WLL network in rural areas;

(ii) Relaxation of the outdoor cable norms to 5 Kms against the Standard of 2.5 Kms from Landline Exchanges;

(iii) BSNL is deploying its mobile network in all the highways, important towns, pilgrim centers and State highways in that order of priority which gives incidental coverage to large parts of rural areas.

Training to youngsters in I.T. Sector

330. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the projected demand both for Information Technology personnel to meet domestic requirements as well as demand from other nations at present and for the next five years *vis-a-vis* present intake capacity and output; and

(b) the details of comprehensive time bound action plan formulated for training of youngsters in IT to meet domestic requirements and cater to the emerging global requirements of trained manpower by various countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEELAHMAD): (a) As per NASSCOM estimates, the total demand for IT Services and Software professionals in FY 2007-08 is estimated to be 1.1 million. Further NASSCOM estimates in 2004, out turn of graduates is 2,460,000 which includes 1,55,000 Engineering degree holders and 1,30,000 Engineering diploma holders while the rest are non-engineering graduates.